

Curtain up on a fantastic cultural year in Hannover

The inauguration of the new annex to Hannover's Sprengel Museum and the re-opening of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library in 2015 will add to the city's already excellent cultural scene. Throughout the whole year, the 60 museums and theatres in Hannover, which has just been awarded the title UNESCO City of Music, will feature one top event after another. The internationally acclaimed rock band AC/DC, for example, will perform its only North German concert in Hannover.

Hannover has now been officially admitted to the top league of music cities. Since the beginning of December, the capital city of Lower Saxony proudly bears the title of UNESCO City of Music and takes its place in the international UNESCO network of Creative Cities alongside Glasgow, Seville, Bogota, Bologna, Ghent and Brazzaville. The range of musical education facilities, the city's impressive achievements in the music and creative business, the wide range of performances in all genres – from pop, rock and jazz right through to ancient, classical and new music – and its many top-class choirs were all factors that convinced the UNESCO Committee in Paris.

Hannover sounds good

There is music in the air in Hannover all year round: the A cappella week (25 April – 3 May) and the Masala World Beat Festival (17 June – 28 June), for example, take their audiences on a melodious trip around various countries. Every year on Ascension Day, Hannover is transformed into the capital of jazz when "enercity swinging hannover" attracts tens of thousands to listen to top-notch jazz ensembles from all over the globe in front of the New Town Hall, or to the sessions at the legendary JazzClub at Hannover's highest hill, Lindener Berg, a one-time venue for jazz greats like Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, or to "Jazz am Ballhof".

"Simply making music" is the motto of the global music festival "Fête de la Musique". Like hundreds of other cities throughout the world, Hannover celebrates this major festival for tolerance and international understanding on 21 June every year.

Fabulous bands such as Die Fantastischen Vier and Revolverheld will take the stage at the NDR Plaza Festival and the N-Joy Starshow (29 & 30 May). Music lovers can also look forward to the Fährmannsfest (31 July – 2 August), lots of intimate club sessions and a number of major rock and pop concerts at such diverse venues as the TUI Arena, the EXPO Plaza, the HDI Arena or the Swiss Life Hall. The line-up in 2015 includes megastar Lionel Richie, the cult rock band AC/DC, Sunrise Avenue, Simply Red, Herbert Grönemeyer and Helene Fischer.

Every year, visitors can find out for themselves just how good Hannover Region sounds during the "Kultursommer", when national and international musicians perform in palaces, churches and abbeys. Classical music events, e.g. as part of PRO MUSICA, are on the bill in the HCC Kuppelsaal, the largest concert hall anywhere in Germany, or the NDR-Sendesaal, the studio of NDR radio station. One of the classical highlights in 2015 will be the International Joseph Joachim Violin Competition (27 September – 10 October). Every three years, Stiftung Niedersachsen – the Arts Foundation of Lower Saxony – invites outstanding young violinists from all over the world to compete here in Hannover.

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Clear the stage for top-level cultural events

Culture has always played a central role in the state capital. The opera and drama sections of Hannover State Theatre are leading lights in the German theatre environment. Perfectly cast ensembles, inspired directors, authors and choreographers repeatedly deliver productions that set international standards. All over the city, there are numerous private theatres which feature exciting productions ranging from light comedy to avantgarde. Theater am Aegi regularly stages musicals and operas by visiting ensembles and also serves as a venue for performances by musicians and comedians.

Georgspalast is where Zarah Leander and Heinz Erhardt once captivated audiences and GOP Variety Theatre now continues its longstanding tradition of entertainment with top-rate shows and a winter musical for children.

One of the highlights of the social season is the opera ball (27 & 28 February). This year, the motto is "A Thousand and One Nights". Hannover will become the focus of attention for dancing aficionados during the Easter Dance Festival (27 March – 6 April) and when the TANZtheater INTERNATIONAL celebrates its 30th anniversary from 3 to 12 September. The annual "Theatre Night" (25 April) gives people the chance to enjoy a fascinating look behind the scenes at more than 20 theatres. Hannover is also the venue for the biennial "Theaterformen", one of the largest German drama festivals (2-12 July 2015).

Hannover, city of art and museums

Unique exhibits and spectacular exhibitions have earned Hannover a reputation as a city of art and museums. Whether art, technology, history or treasures from exotic cultures and from nature, whether international household names or smaller establishments, the museums in Hannover Region offer a hands-on cultural and historical experience. Highly diverse exhibitions, staged for instance by the internationally renowned Hannover Sprengel Museum, August Kestner Museum, kestnergesellschaft, Wilhelm Busch – German Museum of Caricature and Critical Graphic Arts, or the State Museum of Lower Saxony, take visitors on a voyage of discovery, as do many places of interest in the surrounding holiday region, such as the exhibition entitled "The Path to the Crown" at Marienburg Castle. An overview of current exhibitions is available at www.visit-hannover.com/en. A special highlight in 2015 will be the inauguration of the annex to Hannover Sprengel Museum, which will show an exhibition entitled "Ten Rooms, Three Loggias and a Hall" in June 2015.

Following comprehensive renovation work, the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library will be re-opened by Minister-President Stephan Weil on 1 July 2015. Visitors can look forward to a larger service area, a modern lecture hall for the varied cultural programme and an exhibition area which will present some of the library's precious works, including the "Golden Letter" sent by Burma's King Alaungphaya to King George II.

Cultural highlights at Herrenhausen Gardens

The famous Herrenhausen Gardens are also a superb setting for prestigious open-air cultural events. Since 2013, they have had an additional attraction thanks to the re-erected Herrenhausen Palace, which now houses a conference centre and a museum. From 29 May to 14 June, the baroque gardens will provide a perfect venue for the arts festival KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen. The world's leading pyrotechnic experts are sure to cause a stir at the 25th International Fireworks Competition, when they fill the skies with explosive works of art made up of light and music on five evenings between May and September. Dancers, mime artists and musicians abound in the baroque gardens during the "Little Festival in the Great Garden", which begins on

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8 July. During the colder season, the Gallery and the Orangery are popular venues for classical concerts and the GOP winter variety theatre.

Advertising campaign on board Deutsche Bahn ICE trains

To attract visitors to Hannover's diverse cultural amenities, Hannover Marketing und Tourismus GmbH (HMTG) launched an advertising campaign on board Deutsche Bahn trains in November, featuring around 2000 adverts on around 70 ICE high-speed trains. This campaign will be seen by up to 23 million passengers per annum.

For further information and photos for use by journalists are available at www.visit-hannover.com/en/press.

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